

"THE
HARVEST
INDEED
IS
GREAT,
BUT
THE
LABORERS
ARE
FEW.
"PRAY
YE
THEREFORE

The Messenger of Our Lady of Africa

Published by
THE WHITE SISTERS OF AFRICA

METUCHEN

NEW JERSEY

THE
LORD
OF
THE
HARVEST,
THAT
HE
SEND
LABORERS
INTO
HIS
HARVEST."

St. Luke x- 2

**RECOMMENDATION OF HIS EXCELLENCY
THE BISHOP OF TRENTON, N. J.**

I wish to recommend herewith most heartily the Apostolic work of the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa. Their work is truly Apostolic and is most dear to the heart of our beloved Holy Father, Pius XI, the Pope of the Missions. Any encouragement that you may give to them will be blessed most abundantly by Our Divine Master, JESUS CHRIST, who died on the Cross that all men may have Eternal Life. This Congregation of Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa, we have made our very own in the Diocese of Trenton. Their work I have deemed most worthy of my special protection and I commend them most heartily to our good priests and faithful people.

Imprimatur:

+JOHN J. McMAHON
Bishop of Trenton,
Trenton, N. J.

"The work of the Foreign Missions surpasses every other work of Christian charity as far as the soul surpasses the body, as far as Heaven surpasses earth."

—Pius XI, The Pope of the Missions.

LET ALL BE MISSIONARIES

Everyone cannot leave home and country to go to the foreign missions, but all may become Missionaries, if by prayers and alms they help those to whom God has given a special vocation to work in the Field afar.

Whoever helps the Missionary in his apostolic labor will share in his merits and will be rewarded by Him who said: "And whosoever shall give only a glass of cold water to one of those little ones, because he is my disciple, Amen, I say to you he will not lose his reward." (Sy. Matt. 10-42.)

SPIRITUAL FAVORS AND ADVANTAGES

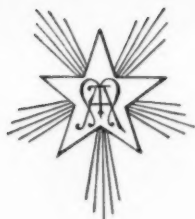
All those who help the missions in one way or another will share in the Masses, prayers and good works offered up daily by the Missionaries and the natives for their Benefactors.

Three Masses are celebrated every month for the intentions of the Benefactors.

For information apply to Rev. Mother Superior, 319 Middlesex Avenue, Metuchen, N. J.

**SEVERAL GOOD WAYS TO HELP THE
MISSIONARY SISTERS**

The perpetual adoption of a Missionary Sister	\$2,500.00
The annual adoption of a Missionary Sister	125.00
To support a dispensary for a year	40.00
The annual adoption of a child in one of the Sisters' orphanages.	40.00
To ransom a woman or young girl for a Catholic marriage	20.00
Provide bread for a child, yearly	10.00
Provide bread for a child, monthly	1.00
To build a hut for a patient in Central Africa	10.00
To support a leper in a hut for a month ..	2.00
To clothe a girl so that she may go to school for a year	5.00
To keep a sanctuary lamp burning for a month	1.00



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Happy, holy, and prosperous New Year is the wish of the White Sisters and the Christians of Africa for their Benefactors and Subscribers to the Messenger of Our Lady of Africa. **HAPPY NEW YEAR!** May the year be happy, not with the happiness that the world gives, but with true happiness, that happiness that comes from God and gives joy in this life, peace at the hour of death, and heaven during all eternity.

HAPPY NEW YEAR! But will this year be a happy one for the millions of pagans who still sit in the ancient superstition of the Gentiles? Will it be a happy one for the millions of pagans who now know of God and who are actually pleading to be delivered out of darkness into the light and kingdom of God? Your prayers and cooperation will decide the question.

O, you who read these lines and who would like to help, but who cannot because of the present depression, Cheer up! You have something more precious than gold to give. Your sufferings and anxieties offered up for the missions will be a valuable spiritual treasury that will draw down God's grace and blessing upon the Missionaries and their undertakings; for without the grace of God they could do nothing whatever for the salvation of souls. And if no one would sustain the Missionaries? They could again do nothing, for, unfortunately, money talks in Africa just as it does in America, but we leave to those to whom God has blest with more than they need to give financial support to the Missionaries. Then, the one and the other will enjoy the peace that the angel promised to men of good will.

THE EDITOR.



The Messenger of Our Lady of Africa



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THE LAST CHRISTMAS OF THE SON-OF-FIRE

The following is a letter from Adrian Atiman, doctor and catechist, to the Reverend Mother Superior General of the White Sisters. Adrian Atiman, a Soudanese by birth, was rescued and educated by Cardinal Lavigerie, our Venerable Founder. He accompanied the White Fathers to Central Africa to fill the role of doctor and catechist. He married a native woman and his son was one of the first two priests of the Tanganika Vicariate to be ordained.

village could not be far off, so I shouted for help. From his field, a man heard me and took me to the village.

Etiquette obliged me to go to see the Sultan's son-in-law first, as he is a distant relative of my wife, and that is why I am always welcomed by the royal family.

Karema, Tanganika Territory
Very Reverend Mother Superior:

For a long time, I have been thinking of writing you some news from Karema, but, events which were interesting some ten years ago, are quite commonplace now, and you have already heard so many African stories that I am afraid a letter from me might bother you. I thought of telling you about the last man I baptized; so that you may have a share in my joy.

A Royal Sick-call

It was Christmas eve; we were all at home, thinking of the happy morrow, so different from Christmas here forty years ago, now that our Mission Village is just like a country parish in Europe.

At four o'clock, a messenger hurriedly entered, and with a trembling hand, gave me a note, running thus: Doctor Adrian, the Sultan Son-of-Fire wants you to come at once to baptize him, just as you baptized his predecessor, Kasagula.

My first thought was one of deep regret, for that meant missing Christmas Mass for the first time in forty years. Besides, I was bound to go all by myself, for no one, not even a pagan will consent to be away from the Mission on the feast of holy joy.

Off to Kasagula

From Karema, to Kasagula, is generally a good two hours' walk. But that day, the plain had become a swamp, and, although I made haste, I had to walk for two hours and a half. According to their nasty habit, the natives had recently altered the direction of the road, and I lost my way. I knew the

The Son-of-Fire

I was taken to the room of my old friend, Son-of-Fire (Mivana-Moliro). Since my last visit two months before, the cancer had made a skeleton of the poor man. I could see at once that the chief would soon see the end of his terrible sufferings; he knew it too, and that is why he was so earnestly wishing to be baptized: he wanted to die a good death, whatever his life may have been.

Son-of-Fire was immediate successor of Kasagula which name means "the one who clears a place." Well did Kasagula clear in order to reign; he drove away before his sword Kalibili and my friend Son-of-Fire.

At Kasagula's death, Son-of-Fire's rights to the throne were recognized, and although he was not crowned he was respected and feared and honored as a Sultan. Notwithstanding the fact that he was still young he was a widower, for despite his fame, power and good fortune, he could not find one single man willing to give him his daughter in marriage



and not one girl ambitious enough to be his royal spouse. He was too harsh, too impetuous, too cruel; he was, in fact too true to his name.

While he had been waiting for me all that day, the patient had caused a Crucifix to be placed before him, and he had prayed earnestly, begging for God's unwearying mercy.

There was but little time left to put the catechumens under instructions, but, in truth, he was not wanting in Christian knowledge; he knew very well the great mysteries of our Faith; he believed them all, and knew many prayers.

Kneeling beside his bed, together with his daughters and a few other relatives we recited the "Our Father," the "Hail Mary" and the act of contrition, the patient's weak voice joining ours. Then I baptized him and called him Joseph, after my priest-son and Noel.

Our neophyte was fully happy. His two daughters who are Christians and all his people were relieved, for they had been so worried about his soul, but I am sure, I was the happiest of the lot. Joseph Noel's mind was at rest, his poor worn out body could get no more help, so I retired to a house to take a little rest.

In the middle of the night I was awakened by a voice saying: "Doctor, what time is it?" I answered it was a quarter after twelve. My answer was immediately followed by a shout such as only natives can utter, and at the same time, the children's clear, silvery voices rang like Christmas bells: "Amezaliwa Mivokoze!" (He is born, the Saviour!)

Christmas Night Devotions in the Brush

The little church in Kasagula is a brick-building, with a brick altar; it has a high steeple waiting for its bell for want of which the children shouted and sang "Noel! Noel!" The Christians had adorned their church according to their taste and with what means they had. Wild flowers and evergreens were the only riches they could put round the altar; but the walls were covered half way up with banana trees and branches of cassava. In a corner, there was a little table to imitate an organ, around which stood four young male choristers. When all had found room, one of the best Christians in the village began

to recite the Rosary, then Christmas hymns were sung in Kiswahili, the local dialect. Alternate prayers and hymns completed the devotions. Then I suggested we recite a prayer in thanksgiving for the grace of baptism granted to Son-of-Fire.

Death and Burial

After the devotions, I went to see Joseph Noel, I found him in the same state, suffering almost intolerable pains in his body, but enjoying almost heavenly peace in his heart.

A few hours later our neophyte passed away. At once the people were reminded of the mourning customs. First, all the cocks had to be killed. The one great, glorious cock, the Sultan, having died, all others were doomed. Wary farmers took theirs away to very distant places, others tried to hide them so as to dull their crowing, but that could not be done for as long as twelve days.

The women and girls all over the country belonging to the dead Sultan are obliged to take off their necklaces and bracelets and wear round their forehead a common piece of string or a long weed. They are absolutely forbidden to bathe or to wash their faces or to cut their hair. The nearest relatives must throw themselves on the ground and roll in the dust in order to show the grief that is in their hearts.



Native Chief and Family

But, as Son-of-Fire had not yet been crowned or enthroned, as he was only chief by birthright, he missed a few posthumous honors. Instead of having his head cut off after death and taken far away to be kept together with the skulls of departed Sultans, Son-of-Fire had only one little finger cut off, dried in the sun and taken to the secret place, the royal necropolis.

Again, instead of having his headless body laid on a stretcher, continually watered under the rays of the tropical sun, water and fire thus hastening the decaying of the corpse, Son-of-Fire was just rolled into a weed-mat, and buried near the bones of his royal predecessor, Kasagula. The Sultan's resting place has no air of grandeur, it is a little spot surrounded by a hedge of greaves, not even a name, not a stone. *Sic transit gloria mundi*.....

But in heaven, Son-of-Fire's soul now rejoices in the glory of the King of kings.

Mary Louise's Christmas Gift

By a student of The Bishop Mc Donnell Memorial High School, Brooklyn

(Courtesy of The Laurel)



ERRY CHRISTMAS! Merry Christmas!" cried a cheery voice, and another more gentle cried, "Wake up, Mary Louise, wake up, dear." Mary Louise opened two sleepy eyes. She saw her mother and younger sister Gertrude standing

by her bed. "Why, Merry Christmas!" she cried, although she little felt what she said. Hopping out of bed, she gave her mother a bear-like hug and kiss, seized her little sister by the arm and pulled her to the window. "Look at that snow! Why, last night there wasn't a flake of snow on the ground, and just look at it now!" commanded Mary Louise. Her mother smiled and slipped softly out of the room. Gertrude, looking up lovingly at her sister, said, "Hurry up, get dressed, Mary Lou, and come down to breakfast." Mary Louise, or Mary Lou, as her younger sister more often called her, replied, "All right, kitten, I won't be a second." Gertrude rewarded her with a kiss and ran out of the room.

Mary Lou, somehow or other, felt very strange, and had no Christmas spirit at all that morning. Why did she not feel as she had other years? Did she not have the nicest and best mother a girl could have? Was she not the sister of two of the most fun-loving boys, and the proud possessor of a younger sister, who was all anyone could desire? Yet Mary Louise was not happy. Presents! She had more than she wished; and here she brought her thoughts to an abrupt end. She hurried downstairs, and was greeted by another group of cheery voices, wishing her Christmas joy. As Mary Lou slipped into the place by her father's side, she returned the greeting.

Breakfast was quickly disposed of, and each of the family was ready to do as he pleased. It was not early, because the entire family had attended Midnight Mass, and breakfast had been served rather late. Mary Louise went into the library, selected a book, and began to read. She read for about half an hour, but the book seemed dull and uninteresting. She tossed it aside, and went in search of her mother, who, in response to Mary Lou's question as to when the dinner was to be served, told her in the evening. "Well, I think I'll take

a walk, then, mother, for a while." said Mary Lou.

"All right, dear, but don't be too long," replied her mother. Mary Lou hurried upstairs, donned her wraps, and before ten minutes had elapsed, was out of the house. She started walking, admiring the holly-wreaths in the different windows, and, before she knew it, she had come to the Church. She entered, for she loved to see the Crib, and to her surprise, she found the building empty. Making her way quickly to the Crib, she knelt before it. The Infant, His Mother and Foster Father seemed so real. Even the sheep and the shepherds seemed alive to Mary Louise. She said a few prayers, and asked the Infant to take away the feeling of depression she felt. Looking at Him more closely, she thought He was beckoning to her. She drew nearer to the Crib, and the Infant seemingly smiled. Was she dreaming? Mary Lou gave herself a shake. She again looked at the Crib, but this time He seemed to be holding a white veil in His tiny, loving hands. Mary Louise looked at the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph. They, too, seemed to be pointing to the object the tender babe held.

Suddenly Mary Lou was a little child again. She remembered the time in elementary school, when a visiting priest had told the girls about the White Sisters and their noble work in the Leper Colony in Africa. How earnestly she had desired to be one! She had thought, however, that the Lord had not chosen her to be a special laborer in His vineyard. She looked back at the Crib, and there was the Infant still patiently holding the veil, and as she looked at it the words, "Whatsoever you do to these, the least of My brethren, you do unto Me," flashed through her mind.

Now Mary Louise knew what had been the matter all day. She knew she would never be happy in this world, even though she attain the pinnacle of earthly success. Tears of joy ran down her cheeks, and as she murmured, "Oh, Lord, I thank Thee," the veil disappeared as swiftly as it had come. In about ten minutes she reached home, and entered the house. "Why, you look very happy, Mary Louise," her mother greeted her.

"No happier than I feel, mother dear," answered Mary Lou. That evening, when Mary Louise retired, her thoughts were on the subject which gave her considerable happiness. As she lay in bed with the stars shining on her face, she knew it was the happiest day in her entire life, and she



At the Mother House, Algiers

thought of the sacred words of our Lord, "Many are called, but few are chosen." She thanked the infant from the depths of her heart, that He had

seen fit to call and choose her for His own special work, that of saving souls, and bringing joy into some poor creatures' lives.

ECHOES FROM AFRICA

From Toma, in the French Soudan we received the following:

Little Jean has a new piece of cloth. "Who gave you your new cloth and why are you wearing it today?" asked one of the Sisters as she met the little one beaming with joy. "Mama did," replied Jean; "She said, 'Today is Sunday. Put on your new cloth and go show it to Jesus'."

An old woman, the guardian of the little boys who remain at the mission, came to have the Sisters wish her a "Happy Feast." She was in such pain she could hardly walk. "Well Ann," said Sr. Julitte, "I see God has given you a nice present for your

feast, hasn't He?" "O, Sister that's nothing. Didn't Jesus have to suffer a Great deal before He died? So I am glad to suffer a little for Him."

The Mother Superior of one of the missions was financially embarrassed and had the children say a prayer to St. Joseph every day after Mass. As the feast of Pentecost approached, this prayer was substituted by the "Veni Creator." When the children left church they began to make their comments. "Did you notice," said a little tot, "Mother had us pray to St. Joseph for money, now, I suppose, that he has filled her pocketbook she is asking the Holy Ghost what to do with it."



At a Leper Asylum

A White Sister's Flock

THE BIRDS called from their nests, the vine leaves waved in the morning breeze, the busy insects sang their matin song but not one of the little ones of St. Charles' responded to the call of nature.

Usually full of life and mirth, these children were silent, depressed and forlorn. What could be the cause of their sadness? What misfortune had wrought such a change in this lively, merry group? If you had asked the little ones themselves, they would have answered according to their native custom by a question: "Is it possible to be gay and happy when one's mother is sad?"

That morning a cablegram had arrived with bad news for the Sister in charge. Her mother lay dying and the doctors gave no hope. The children grieved with the Sister, for was she not a mother to them? If her mother would die, how sorry they would be. How could they fail to sympathize with the one who was all to them?

Such were their thoughts as time dragged on; never did a day seem so long. Bells, with the exception of the one that called the children to the refectory, generally rang too quickly, but today, time just would not pass.

All things have an end, however. Evening crept

on apace; the western sky wore in sympathy a purple and lavender cloak to hide the golden and russet glow of its glorious robes.

Night prayers like sweet smelling incense ascended to the throne of God, and silent groups filed to the dormitory to drown in sleep the sorrows of the day. But though their little feet made no noise, bodies swayed to and fro and their strange gait told the tale that something unusual was taking place.

As the Sister advanced, what was her astonishment to find that each child had a bundle of twigs. When asked for an explanation, the little ones pleaded so earnestly and with such eloquence to be allowed to keep their secret that the Sister was constrained to comply with their request. Nevertheless, she kept a discreet watch over them and to her amazement she saw each child silently spread out



They ask heavenly roses for their benefactors

the twigs over her bed and then, as grave as any monk of the middle ages, lie down upon them. What could it all mean?

The next morning, calling a little one aside, The Sister asked her why the children thus used the twigs. "Sister," she sweetly answered, "we slept on them so that God would cure your mother." The sacrifice was accepted, for news soon came that the mother was better.

But I hear you ask, "Who are these children capable of such heroic sacrifice and from where do they come?"

They are the children of one of our orphanages near Algiers, little Africans, evidently predestined by their Maker for a high place in Heaven. Of some no story is known; others, homeless waifs or ill-treated by their kin, were guided by Providence to the sheltering door; while others, when still babies, were left at the orphanage threshold without marks of identification.

From where do they come? Little Arabs from

the Chelif Plain or from Biskra and the surrounding villages; others are Kaybles from the Atlas Mountains; some are little negroes from the Sudan, but what difference does it make to the keeper of the flock? Are they not all little lambs confided to her by the Good Shepherd?

Some of these children are fair with golden hair; others of dark complexion have black tresses which glisten like a raven's wing; still others are adorned by nature with dark frizzly hair and faces that shine like new patent leather. Some even have pretty designs in tattooing as a set-off to their features.

Like all healthy children they like to run, jump and play; they also love those who are good to them, cherishing the hand that feeds them. The Sister in charge does not claim that they are all angels but she considers them as her little lambs and declares they have but one fault: that of having insatiable appetites.

In these days of depression this is a serious fault indeed and no one knows it better than the shepherdess of the flock who must provide for all those



One fault! Insatiable appetites!

hungry mouths. The future would be very gloomy if the Sister did not count on the assistance of the Little Flower of Lisieux, to whom she has entrusted the care of her orphans. Daily folding their hands together, these little ones ask their holy protectress to shower heavenly roses upon their benefactors.

Any offering, no matter how small, for the orphans' bread would be deeply appreciated by the poor shepherdess who has over a hundred little mouths to provide for. In return you will have the prayers of these little children and, better still, the blessing of Him Who was once a poor child Himself and Who said: "As long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me."

S. Marie Edith, W. S.

